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VIETNAM: LEAKS FROM ANONYMOUS OFFICIAL SOURCES

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, stories attributed to unnamed "U.S. officials" have been appearing in the press, to the effect that the war in Vietnam does not necessarily have to end in a negotiated settlement. The unnamed officials want to be sure, apparently, that the public understands that there is an alternative to negotiations. What these officials suggest, as the alternative, amounts to a total military solution, with the Vietcong being driven into a state of nonexistence.

This thesis is valid as a basis for college discussion. It is valid as a subject for consideration in the classified recesses of the Executive branch of the Government. It is not valid, however, as a "leak" from anonymous official sources, leaving the strong impression that the policy of seeking negotiations is all but abandoned and we are about to adopt a new one. Indeed, one newspaper carried a banner headline on the basis of this leak: "U.S. Now Sees Vietnam Victory by Force of Arms." The impression left by the story is clear: It is that the doctrine of "unconditional negotiations" is about to be replaced by the doctrine of unconditional triumph as official policy. Whether that is accurate or not, is beside the point. Whether it is a practical possibility is beside the point.

The point is that official United States policy on Vietnam, as enunciated time and again by the President, is and remains one of seeking an honorable negotiated end to the conflict as quickly as possible. The President's policy—and it is the only official policy of this Government—is not to prove the theoretical possibility that a war of attrition without negotiation can end in a triumph in 1, 5, 10, or 15 years.

The point is, too, that it is not college students or professors without responsibility for official policy who are advancing this concept; it is not the press or political leaders out of office and without official responsibilities; it is not the Representatives or Senators, who have independent constitutional responsibilities, who are discussing this alternative policy. Rather, it is anonymous "U.S. officials" who can have no responsibilities except official responsibilities in these matters; it is U.S. officials who are not privileged to speak on policy outside of the walls of the Executive branch except as they express the official policy of the United States as enunciated by the President and under his direction, and with his approval. For them to speak otherwise, even anonymously, is to imply strongly that the President of the United States so thinks.

Now, it is true that these official sources were at pains to make it clear that they support the President's policy of seeking an end to the Vietnamese conflict by negotiations, even as they advance an alternative approach of a solution by attrition. Well, if they are supporting the President's policy, why do they insist upon remaining unnamed? Why, then, do they hesitate to attach their names to that which they are discussing with the press?

Indeed, who are these official but unnamed sources? As one Senator, I would like to know in order to estimate the significance of the story, in order to know what to tell my constituents when they inquire as to the Nation's policies respecting Vietnam. Are these officials in the White House? Are they in the Defense Department? The State Department? The CIA? Or are they scattered throughout the executive branch? Is it the head of a department who advances this new concept of Vietnamese policy? Or is it a chairwarmer at a southeast Asia desk somewhere or a guard at the front door of the Pentagon or the State Department?

Whoever they may be, one thing is certain about these unnamed official sources. They are most irresponsible sources, in a situation in which the utmost of responsibility is vital, and I use the word vital, rarely and most advisedly. Here, we have almost 150,000 men in Vietnam; the number is going up steadily and the end is not yet in sight. The President has made it clear, not once but a dozen times, that he seeks an end to the Vietnamese conflict through negotiations, and that negotiations as soon as possible are in the interest of this Nation and of all concerned. That is his policy; that is U.S. official policy—period.

In these circumstances, for an unnamed official source to engage in an idle discussion—if that is what it was—of an alternative policy of triumph by attrition, is, to say the least, a breach of trust. With the President in the hospital it is, indeed, an inexcusable breach of trust.

So I would say to these anonymous officials: You are appointed officials of this Government. Your function is not to speculate to the press on the President's policy. Much less is it your function to advance publicly alternatives to his policies, even under the anonymous cloak of "official sources." Your function is to advise the President and carry out, in good faith, foreign policies which he makes in accord with constitutional processes. Any other course, particularly in the critical Vietnamese situation, is an invitation to a lengthening of the casualty lists, to the most serious difficulties and division at home and to disaster in our relations with the rest of the world.

That ought to be understood without the saying by every appointed official of the Government. The recent rash of anonymous official speculation on Vietnam, however, makes it clear that it needs to be said.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the Record, nine excerpts from the President's statement to the press on July 28, 1965, articles and editorials on this subject.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

Second, once the Communists know, as we know, that a violent solution is impossible, then a peaceful solution is inevitable. We are ready now, as we have always been, to move from the battlefield to the conference table.

I have stated publicly and many times, again and again, America's willingness to begin unconditional discussions with any Gov-

ernment at any place at any time.

Fifteen efforts have been made to start these discussions, with the help of 40 nations throughout the world. But there has been no answer. But we are going to continue to persist, if persist we must, until death and desolation have led to the same conference table where others could now join us at a much smaller cost.

I have spoken many times of our objectives in Vietnam. So has the Government of South Vietnam. Hanoi has set forth its own proposals. We are ready to discuss their proposals and our proposals and any proposals of any Government whose people may be affected, for we fear the meeting room no more than we fear the battlefield. And in this pursuit we welcome, and we ask for the concern and the assistance of any nation and all nations.

And if the United Nations and its officials or any one of its 114 members can by deed or word, private initiative or public action, bring us nearer an honorable peace, then they will have the support and gratitude of the United States of America.

I've directed Ambassador Goldberg to go to New York today and to present immediately to Secretary General U Thant a letter from me requesting that all the resources and the energy and the immense prestige of the United Nations be employed to find ways to halt aggression and to bring peace in Vietnam.

But we insist and we will always insist that the people of South Vietnam shall have the right of choice, the right to shape their own destiny in free elections in the South or throughout all Vietnam under international supervision, and they shall not have any Government imposed upon them by force and terror so long as we can prevent it.

As I just said, I hope that every member of the United Nations that has any idea or any plan, any program, any suggestion, that they will not let them go unexplored.

And as I have said so many times, if anyone questions our good faith and will ask us to meet them to try to reason this matter out, they will find us at the appointed place, the appointed time and the proper chair.

A. I have made very clear in my San Francisco speech my hope that the Secretary General under his wise leadership would explore every possibility that might lead to a solution of this matter. In my letter to the Secretary General this morning which Ambassador Goldberg will deliver later in the day, I reiterate my hopes and my desires and I urge upon him that he—if he agrees—that he undertake new efforts in this direction.

Ambassador Goldberg understands the challenge. We spent the weekend talking about the potentialities and the possibilities, our hopes and our dreams, and I believe that we will have an able advocate and a searching negotiator who, I would hope, could someday find success.

A. We have stated time and time again that we would negotiate with any Government, any time, any place. The Vietcong would have no difficulty in being represented and having their views presented if Hanoi

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